

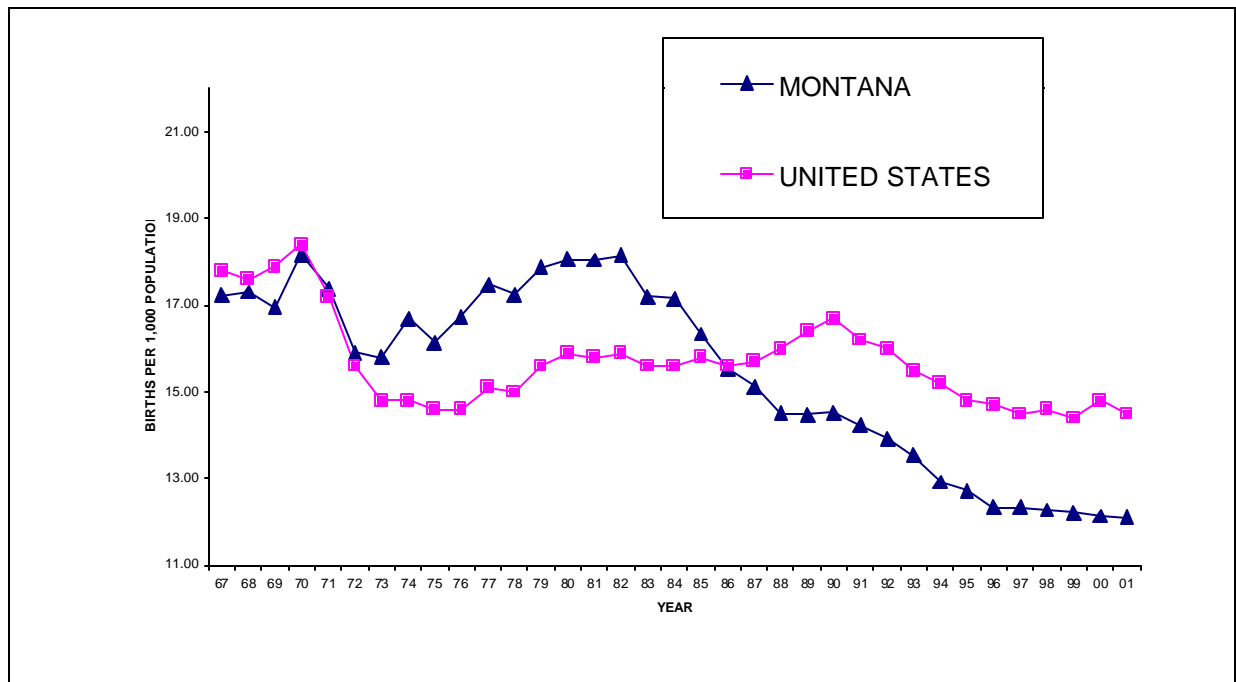
NATALITY

There were 10,947 babies born to Montana residents in 2001. **Table 1** shows the frequency and rate of births occurring in Montana (regardless of place of residence) at five-year intervals from 1910 to 1945 and those to all Montana residents (regardless of place of occurrence) each year since 1946.

The long-term decline in Montana's birth rate since 1982 continues. **Figure 5** below compares the resident birth rates for Montana and the U.S. for the last 35 years.

Figure 5

RESIDENT BIRTH RATES MONTANA AND THE UNITED STATES, 1967-2001



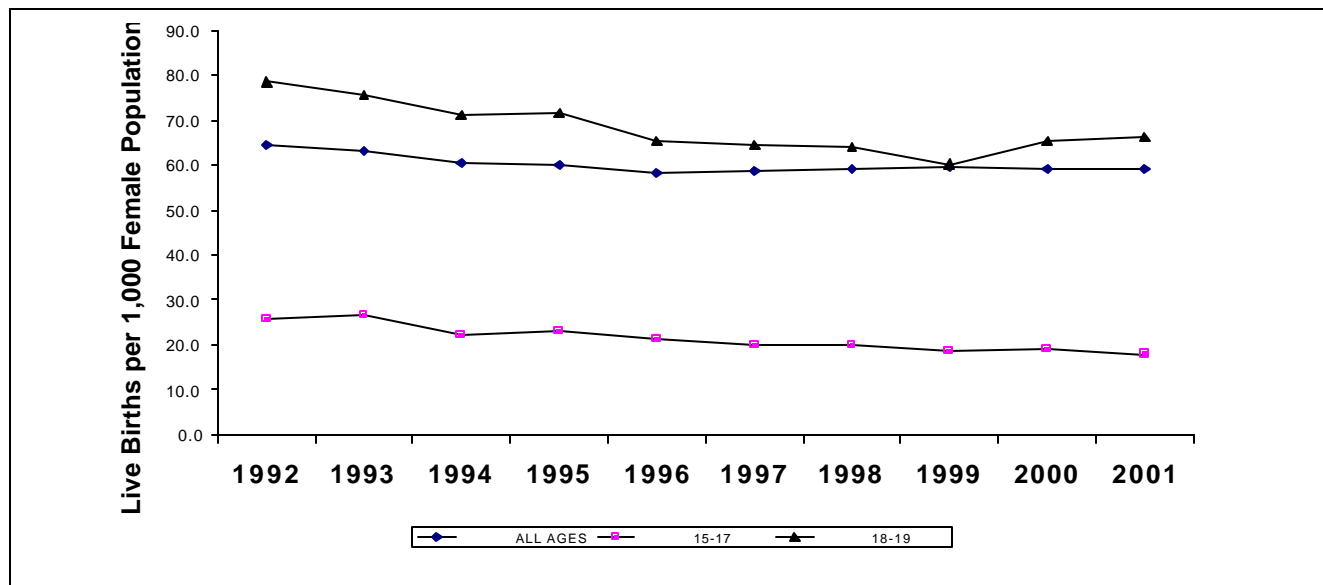
While the Montana rate exceeded the U.S. rate from 1971 to 1985, it began to decline in the early 1980's, fell below the U.S. rate in the mid-80's, and has been the lower of the two since. Preliminary national estimates for 2001 showed Montana's birth rate to be among the lowest in the nation and, except for North Dakota's rate, the lowest for any state west of the Mississippi river. The Montana birth rate for 2001, 12.1 per thousand population, is the lowest ever recorded for the state.

FERTILITY

The fertility rate, calculated as the number of births per 1,000 females of childbearing age (assumed to be ages 15-44, inclusive), is more useful than the birth rate for many analytic purposes because it is specific with regards to sex and age of the "at-risk" population. Montana's fertility rate for the last decade, also among the lowest in the nation, is shown in **Figure 6** for mothers of all ages, mothers between the ages of 15 and 17, and those between the ages of 18 and 19. This graph shows fertility rates for Montana mothers of all races.

Figure 6

**FERTILITY RATES FOR MOTHERS OF ALL RACES
MONTANA TEENS AND MOTHERS OF ALL AGES, 1992-2001***

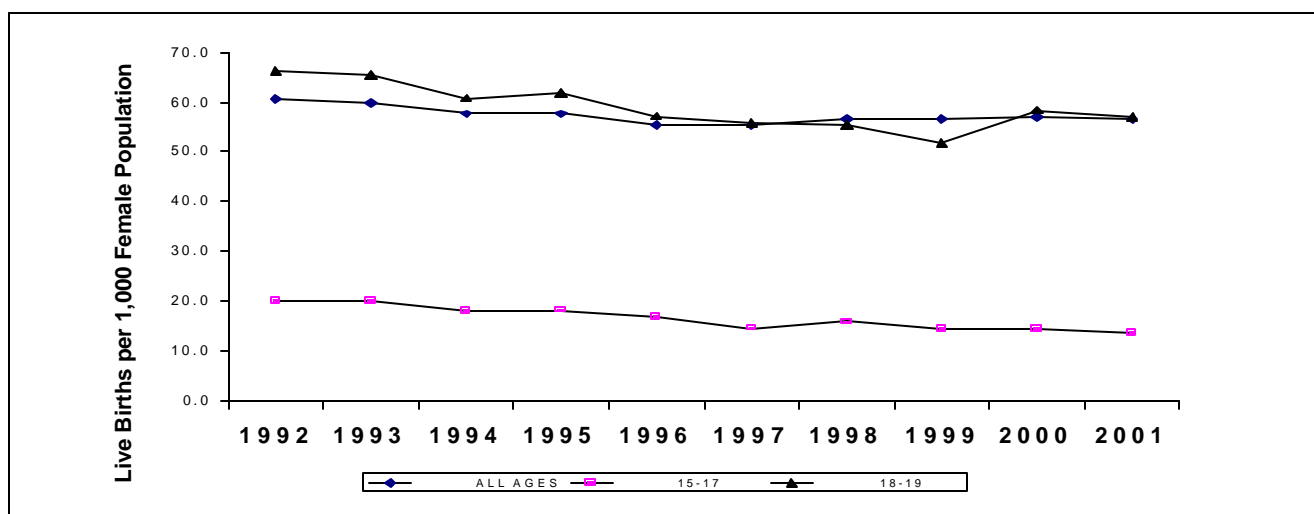


* Detailed population estimates for 2001 are unavailable. The rate for 2001 is based on population estimates for 2000.

The rate of fertility among various racial groups can be quite different, as is illustrated in **Figures 7 and 8** on this and the next page. In 2001, the fertility rate for Montana's white mothers of any age was 56.7. The rate for white mothers between 15 and 17 was 13.7, and the rate for white mothers between the ages of 18 and 19 was 57.0. Fertility rates for Native Americans were substantially higher in all age groups—104.5, 66.6, and 194.7, respectively.

Figure 7

**FERTILITY RATES FOR WHITE MOTHERS
MONTANA TEENS AND MOTHERS OF ALL AGES, 1992-2001***

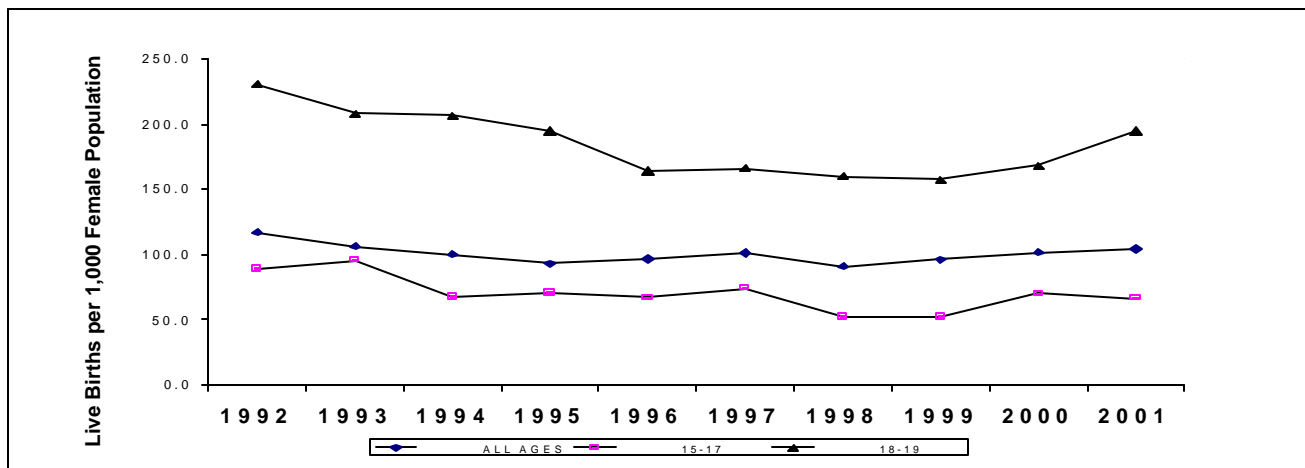


* Beginning in the year 2000, the Census records the number of persons of multiple races. Therefore, the enumeration of whites may be an undercount and the

white fertility rate a slight overestimate. Detailed population estimates for 2001 are unavailable. The rate for 2001 is based on population estimates for 2000. It is also notable that the rate of change in fertility rates can be quite different for different races. During the past decade, fertility rates for white mothers in the three age groups mentioned declined by 0.07 percent, 0.22 percent, and 0.19 percent. Those for Native American mothers declined at 0.13 percent, 0.12 percent, and 0.24 percent, respectively.

Figure 8

FERTILITY RATES FOR NATIVE AMERICAN MOTHERS



MONTANA TEENS AND MOTHERS OF ALL AGES, 1992-2001*

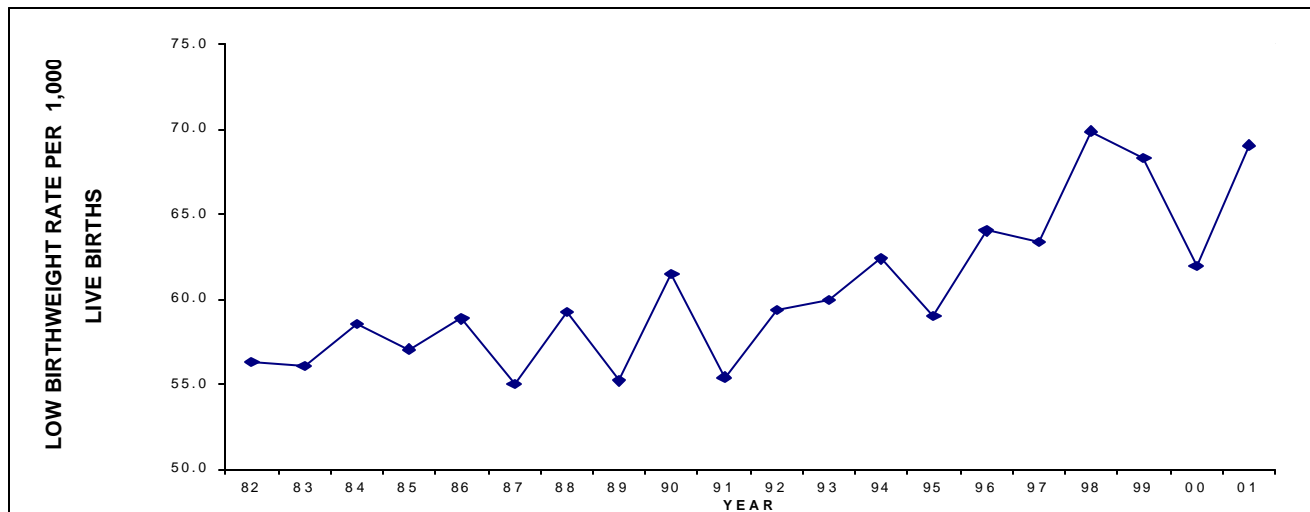
* Beginning in the year 2000, the Census records the number of persons of multiple races. Therefore, the enumeration of Native Americans may be an undercount and the Native American fertility rate a slight overestimate. Detailed population estimates for 2001 are unavailable. The rate for 2001 is based on population estimates for 2000.

LOW BIRTHWEIGHT

Table 7 shows the frequency of birth by birthweight category and the mother's county of residence. **Figure 9**, below, shows an increasing rate of low birthweight babies born to Montanans. The rate was 56.3 in 1982 and 69.1 in 2001. While low birthweight has been identified by NCHS as one of the best predictors of infant death, this does not seem to be the case for the Montana infant population as a whole, as the trends of infant and fetal mortality among Montanans in **Figure 15** show.

Figure 9

RATE OF LOW BIRTHWEIGHT BIRTHS MONTANA RESIDENTS, 1982-2001



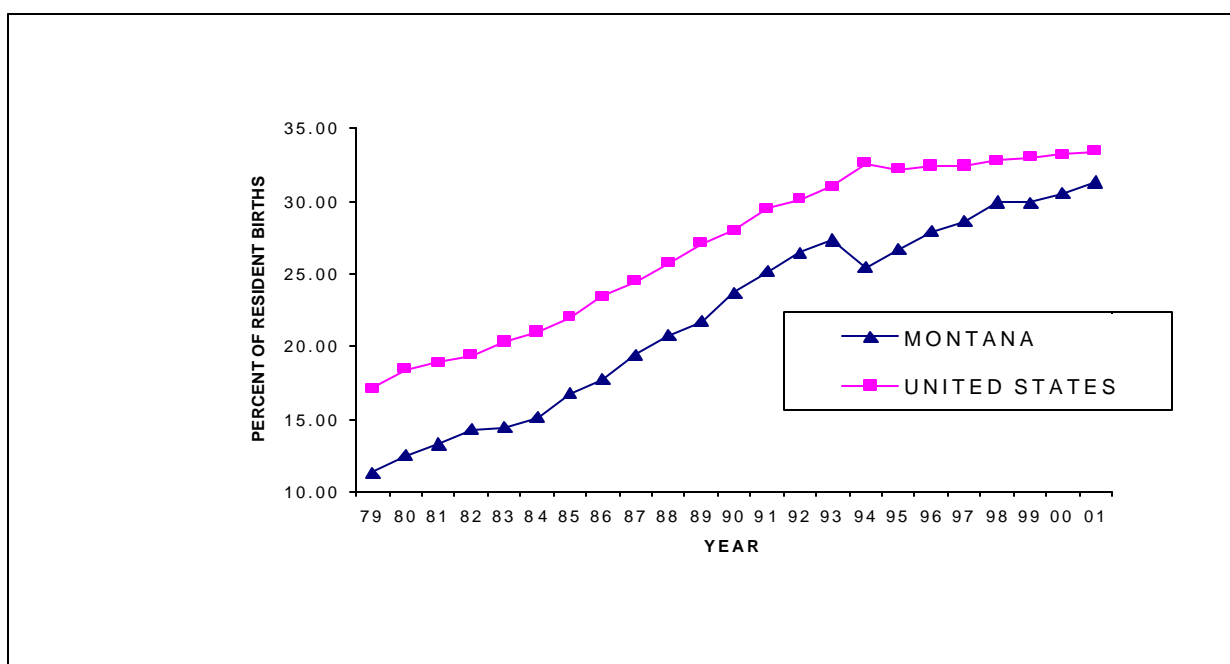
MOTHER'S AGE, RACE, AND MARITAL STATUS

Those giving birth in 2001 were predominantly married white women between the ages of 20 and 35 years. **Table 27** shows the frequency and percent distribution of births to Montana residents by the mother's age and county of residence. **Table 4** shows the frequency of births by race and county of residence of the mother. Any of the races shown may include women of Hispanic origin.

Table 5 shows the frequency and percent distribution of resident births to unmarried women for the years 1997 through 2001. **Table 26** shows the frequency of birth by marital status of the mother for each of Montana's counties. **Table 27** shows the frequency of birth (and the other reported pregnancy outcomes) by age group of the mother and her county of residence. **Figure 10**, below, shows the trend in those births for Montana and the United States since 1979. Births to unmarried women represented 12.5% of Montana's resident births in 1980, 23.7% in 1990, 30.5% in 2000, and 31.3% in 2001.

Figure 10

PERCENT OF BIRTHS TO UNMARRIED MOTHERS MONTANA AND U.S. RESIDENTS, 1979 – 2001



By comparison, unmarried women in the U.S. accounted for 18.4% of the resident births in 1980, 28.0% in 1990, 33.2% in 2000, and 33.4 in 2001 (preliminary).

METHOD OF DELIVERY

More than four-fifths of the infants delivered in Montana in the years 1991 through 2000 were delivered vaginally (including those delivered vaginally after the mother had a previous C-section). As **Figure 11** shows, the likelihood of a vaginal delivery decreases somewhat with increasing age of the mother. This pattern holds for both whites and Native Americans.

Figure 11

FREQUENCY AND PERCENT DISTRIBUTION OF LIVE BIRTHS BY AGE OF MOTHER AND METHOD OF DELIVERY MONTANA OCCURRENCES, 1992-2001

METHOD OF DELIVERY		ALL AGES	UNDER 15	15-17	18-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45 AND OVER	NOT STATED
ALL METHODS	Number	109,308	136	4,312	8,775	29,747	30,432	23,153	10,664	2,085	99	5
	Percent	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
VAGINAL	Number	84,314	117	3,738	7,370	23,967	23,380	16,797	7,496	1,375	71	3
	Percent	77.1	86.0	86.7	84.0	80.6	76.8	72.9	70.3	65.9	71.7	60.0
VAGINAL AFTER C-SECTION	Number	3,519	-	6	85	706	1,089	1,036	503	92	2	-
	Percent	3.2	0.0	0.1	1.0	2.4	3.6	4.5	4.7	4.4	2.0	0.0
PRIMARY C-SECTION	Number	13,096	19	549	1,145	3,477	3,446	2,757	1,347	338	18	-
	Percent	12.0	14.0	12.7	13.0	11.7	11.3	12.0	12.6	16.2	18.2	0.0
REPEAT C-SECTION	Number	8,321	-	17	172	1,589	2,503	2,444	1,312	276	8	-
	Percent	7.6	0.0	0.4	2.0	5.3.0	8.2	10.6	12.3	13.2	8.1	0.0
NOT STATED	Number	58	-	2	3	8	14	19	6	4	-	2
	Percent	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.0	40.0